

April 13, 2004 Mr. John L. Margowski, Director
Waukesha County Veterans' Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NATIONAL CEMETERY BURIAL LOCATIONS ONLINE

WASHINGTON - More than three million records showing where veterans have been buried in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) national cemeteries are now available online. The innovation will make it easy for anyone with Internet access to search for the gravesite locations of deceased family members and friends.

The nationwide grave locator contains more than three million records of veterans and dependents buried in VA's 120 cemeteries since the Civil War. It also has records of some burials in state veterans' cemeteries and burials in Arlington National Cemetery from 1999 to the present.

"This advance in service culminates years of effort by VA's national cemetery staffs to put old paper records into this database," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi. "Making burial locations more accessible may bring; more visitors to the honored resting places that we consider national shrines and historical treasures."

The records date to the establishment of the first national cemeteries during the Civil War. The Web site -- at www.cem.va.gov -- will be updated nightly with information on burials the previous day.

The site displays the same information that visitors to national cemeteries find on kiosks or in written ledgers to locate gravesites: name, dates of birth and death, period of military service, branch of service and rank if known, the cemetery's location and phone number, plus the grave's precise location in the cemetery.

The home page, "Burial and Memorial Benefits," allows the reader to select the Nationwide Gravesite Locator to begin a search.

State cemetery burial records are from those cemeteries that use VA's database to order government headstones and markers for veterans' graves. Since 1999, Arlington National Cemetery, operated by the Department of Army, has used that database.

The information in the database comes from records of interment, which before 1994 were paper records, kept at each cemetery. VA's interment records contain more information than what is shown on the Internet and cemetery kiosks. Some information, such as identification of the next of kin, will not be shown to the public for privacy reasons. Immediate family members with a government identification card may request to see the full record of a burial when they visit a national cemetery.

For more information about the National Cemetery Burial Locations Online, contact: the Waukesha County Veterans' Service Office, located in the Human Service Center, 500 Riverview Avenue, Room G138, Waukesha, WI 53188-3680, or call 262-548-7732. Also, see our web site at www.waukeshacounty.gov/veterans. More information is also available on the WDVA web site at <http://dva.state.wi.us>.